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Board of education selects its 4 finalists – Hopes to have commissioner signed by mid-july

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The Kentucky Board of **Education** has narrowed the list of candidates for state **education commissioner** to four.

The four names could be released Friday morning, or as soon as all candidates have been notified, Board Chairman Joe Brothers said.

"We're working right now on confirming some final details before we release a statement," Brothers said by phone Thursday. "We're guessing right now that it's going to be in the morning."

Brothers said the board plans to meet for more discussion at a special meeting July 8 - possibly in Lexington - after more interviews with the four finalists.

"We'll interview them individually," he said.

It's unclear whether the board would select a new **commissioner** at that meeting. The panel apparently could make a contract offer to its top choice, pending final background checks, board spokeswoman Lisa Gross said.

The hope is to have a contract signing about July 17, Brothers said.

The state board has said it wants the new **commissioner** in place by Aug. 1, in anticipation of the start of the new school year. But Brothers said the actual start date could be flexible, depending on how much time the person the board selects might need to get ready.

The new **commissioner** will replace Jon Draud, who stepped down late last year because of health problems.

About 300 people applied to succeed Draud.

Greenwood & Asher Associates Inc., a search firm hired by the state board, trimmed that list to 12 leading candidates, whom the board interviewed in Northern Kentucky last month.

State board members met Thursday morning for about three hours behind closed doors in Lexington to discuss their impressions of the candidates, based on those interviews.

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